

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 08795 271641Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 MC-02
ACDA-07 OMB-01 AID-05 IGA-02 TRSE-00 /073 W
-----271744Z 001360 /43

R 271542Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1084
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 8795

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGSBC PFOR SY LE
SUBJ: KHADDAM DISMISSES PROBLEM OF WEAPONS COLLECTION IN LEBANON

1. I ASKED KHADDAM DECEMBER 24 IF HE HAD ANY COMMENT ON THE PROSPECTS FOR THE COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS IN LEBANON. HE REPLIED THAT SYRIA WAS NOT PLEASED WITH THE CONTINUED DELAYS WHICH HAD ARISEN OVER COLLECTION EFFORTS. SARKIS, DAMASCUS BELIEMED, WAS NOT BEING ACTIVE ENOUGH IN THIS REGARD.

2. KHADDAM CONFIRMED THAT HE HEARD CAMILLE CHAMOUN WAS ILL FROM A HEART ATTACK. HE SPOKE WARMLY OF DANY CHAMOUN'S PERFORMANCE AND LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL.

3. COMMENT: THIS IS THE FIRST COMMENT CRITICAL OF SARKIS' PERFORMANCE WHICH I HAVE HEARD FROM ANY SYRIAN OFFICIAL. WE EXPECT MOUNTING IMPATIENCE IN DAMASCUS WITH SARKIS IF THE LEBANESE PRESIDENT FINDS IT IMPOSSIBLE TO TAKE EARLY ACTION ON ARMS COLLECTION. CONTINUED CLASHES BETWEEN THE SYRIAN ASF ELEMENTS AND THE PALESTINIAN- LEBANESE
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 08795 271641Z

LEFT SEEM LIKELY IF NEGOTIATIONS OVER ARMS COLLECTION ARE PROTRACTED. IN ANY EVENT THE SYRIAN PREFERENCE FOR DIRECT ACTION VERSUS LEBANESE INCLINATION TO SEEK COMPLEX POLITICAL COMPROMISES PROMISE TO BE A CONSTANT IRRITANT IN THEIR RELATIONSHIP.
MURPHY

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NNN

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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